



Affiliated To Bowls England

# BOWLS OXFORDSHIRE

Risk Assessments  
Draft Policy Paper No: DP11

## RISK ASSESSMENTS

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### 1 AIMS & PURPOSE

**Risk Assessments** are an important step in protecting our bowls club members and visitors from harm, as well as complying with the law. It helps focus on the important risks that really matter, the ones with the potential to cause real harm and help establish good practice. In order to make informed judgements about health and safety practice around a bowling green or for a special event, it is necessary to understand:

- **Risk Assessment Process**
- The distinction between '**Risks**' and '**Hazards**'
- The concept of '**As far as is reasonably practicable**'

**Risk Assessment Process.** This is the ongoing process to evaluate the level of risk and identify methods for risk reduction. Two factors are used in determining a risk:

- **Probability** - the likelihood of an accident occurring
- **Impact** - the potential severity of any injury

#### Risks & Hazards

- **Hazard** is anything that may cause harm (e.g.: chemicals, electricity, slips and falls, uneven paving)
- **Risk** is the possibility that somebody could be harmed

**“As far as is reasonably practicable”.** The law does not expect our club to eliminate all risk, but we are required to protect people as ‘far as reasonably practicable’. A person who is required to do something so far as is reasonably practicable must assess, on the one hand, the risks of an activity and, on the other, the cost in money, time or trouble of safety measures which would avoid risks.

### 2 PROCEDURE

#### What is a Risk Assessment?

**A Risk Assessment** is a systematic method of looking at the risks resulting from all the activities necessary in running our bowls clubs, considering what could go wrong, and deciding on suitable control measures to prevent harm, damage or injury. The

assessment should include the controls required to eliminate, reduce or minimise the risks.

### **Why conduct a Risk Assessment?**

Risk Assessments are a fundamental requirement to appreciate what and where the risks are that may be putting our members and visitors in danger.

### **What should a Risk Assessment cover?**

Assessments must consider everyone who could be affected by an activity – particularly visitors and members of the public who may not be familiar with the playing area and club layout. Special attention should be given to children and mobility impaired and disadvantaged persons.

### **Legal duties and obligations around Risk Assessment**

The process is regulated by **The Management of Health and Safety at Work, etc (HASAW) Regulations 1974.**

### **Assessing risks**

It is important that Risk Assessments are carried out systematically and all the foreseeable risks considered. The **Health and Safety Executive** recommend an approach where you carry out the process in five steps:

1. **Identify the hazards** associated with normal activities
2. **Identify who could be harmed** by those hazards
3. **Identify how we manage the risks** at present and what further steps might be required to reduce the risks in the future.
4. **Record the findings** of your assessment and inform those at risk of the controls
5. **Review the Risk Assessment** on a regular basis (e.g.: if the members, visitors, the activity or the equipment used changes).

Assessments should be reviewed annually if the risks are high and up to every three years when the risks are low. Each activity should be viewed as critically as possible, observing how it is observed from all potential users.

### **Controlling risks**

When deciding on control measures the following principles should be applied:

- Can the risk be avoided or eliminated?
- Can the risks be contained or localised?
- Can the activity be adapted to suit the circumstances?
- Can new equipment or procedure be used?

## **3. RATING OF RISKS**

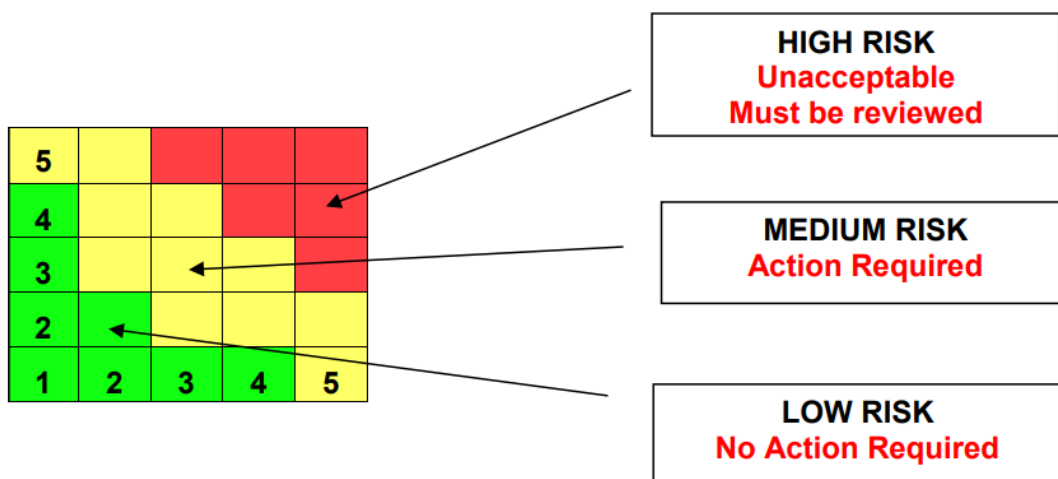
Evaluate the risk and decide if existing precautions are adequate or if more should be done. Consider how likely it is that each hazard will occur (**probability**) and the severity of harm that will result (**impact**) if it does. This will determine whether we need to do more to reduce the risk.

What must be decided for each significant hazard is whether this remaining risk is **High, Medium or Low** as follows:

PROBABILITY		IMPACT	
1	Zero	1	No impact
2	Low -Will seldom occur	2	Slight Injuries requiring first aid only
3	Medium - Will occasionally occur	3	Serious Injuries requiring paramedic or a visit to hospital
4	High - Will frequently occur	4	Major Injuries causing stay in hospital or absence from work
5	Very High- Certain or near certain will occur	5	Severe Death, or major injury or significant irreversible health damage

**RISK RATING = PROBABILITY x IMPACT**

< 5	LOW No action required
5-14	MEDIUM Action required to reduce risk
> 14	HIGH Unacceptable – risk must be reviewed



**Our real aim must be to make all hazards low risk.**

## 4 ACTION PLANS

An **Action Plan** should now be prepared listing the actions from the Risk Assessment. Even after all precautions have been taken some risks usually remain.

It is important to be able to show:

- ✓ a proper check was made.
- ✓ Consideration of who might be affected.
- ✓ All the significant hazards were dealt with.
- ✓ Proper consideration of the number of people who could be involved.
- ✓ The actions taken are reasonable.
- ✓ The resulting remaining risk is low.

## 5 REGULAR REVIEW

Nothing stays the same. Sooner or later, there will be new equipment, substances and procedures that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense, therefore, to review what you are doing on an ongoing basis.

### Reviews are recommended as follows:

- Annual reviews of Risk Assessments if there are high risks identified.
- No longer than 3-year intervals if the risks are low
- If there have been any changes?
- If so, are there improvements you still need to make?
- If your members or visitors have spotted a problem?
- As a result of what you have learnt from accidents or near misses?

## 6. TYPICAL RISKS AT BOWLS CLUBS

Bowls Clubs are generally small organisations; the Club does not employ any full time staff, but the Health and Safety law requires that where volunteers are used on a regular basis (e.g. Secretary, Treasurer, Green Staff) they should, for the purposes of the Act, be treated as employees, even if unpaid. Bowls Oxfordshire has identified the following principle areas where it needs to monitor closely risks associated with the work done by volunteers.

- a) Fire
- b) Trips & Falls
- c) Electricity - risk of fire and personal injury
- d) Chemicals / Fertilisers
- e) Use of machinery
- f) Food safety
- g) First Aid
- h) Children and "Adults at Risk"

### 4. Measures in Place to Mitigate Risk

**Fire :-** The fire extinguishers are inspected annually and serviced by qualified personnel. Emergency Lighting is provided when social events take place.

**Trips/Falls :-** At the beginning of each season the premises / green are checked to ensure that potential hazards are appropriately marked and

that any necessary warning signs are visible. An Accident Book is maintained and kept on the premises in which all incidents are recorded.

**Electricity :-** Electrical installations and portable electrical equipment are subject to periodic inspection and testing.

**Chemicals / Fertilisers :-** Chemicals and Fertilisers are held securely under lock and key. Use of chemicals is by licensed persons only or contracted out to an appropriately qualified contractor. Wherever possible safer alternatives should be selected before chemicals are handled.

**Use of Machinery :-** All machinery is kept fully maintained and regularly serviced. First time users of machinery are trained and initially supervised by experienced operators.

**Food Safety :-** Kitchen facilities are maintained to a high standard and members are made aware of Food Hygiene requirements.

**First Aid :-** The Club cannot necessarily from its own membership expect to have trained first aiders on hand to deal with any incident. However, clubs are encouraged to train at least a couple of first aiders.

Clubs should provide a first aid box that is regularly checked. The location of the first aid box should be known by all members. Information about how emergency assistance can be obtained should be displayed in the members area. It is helpful to have a mobile phone in the clubhouse or agreement from members, so members' mobiles can be used.

Where a Defibrillator is situated within the Clubhouse area it should have clear signage. Ensure it is checked monthly and the pads remain within the date stated for replacement. A proportion of the members should be trained to use a defibrillator, although instructions are given automatically in an emergency.

### **Hot Weather :-**

The club will ensure that members do not put themselves at risk by bowling in extreme heat conditions of 27 degrees Celsius and above. Short breaks from the heat should be considered, plus cold water available to players for re-hydration throughout the game.

**“Children and Adults at Risk”** :- Clubs should have a clearly publicised Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Each club should seek to provide a safeguarding officer, duly trained for the purpose and when not available, seek support either from a neighbouring club or from County officials.

**Risks on the green:-** surfaces affected by poor weather need more care when manoeuvring. Running on the green should be discouraged. New members should be taught how to trap a bowl which comes towards them, by using the sole of their shoe. Bowls should not be dropped, but are placed on the ground. They should also be shown the safe way of getting on and off the green. Players “ firing” into the head should warn players at the receiving end. After an end has finished, move all bowls to behind the mat (2 m is best) and be wary of the trip hazards created.

Risk assessments are mostly common sense and experienced members, should aim to eliminate risks as soon as noticed, by notifying competent people around the club if they can't do something themselves at the time.